Of Dreams and Death

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Of Dreams and Death

by lumosatnight

Summary

They meet every one hundred years. At the same time, at the same pub. They order the same drinks and share the same air. Each time, however, is not the same. Ron is not the same.

Or, Ron is gifted immortal life. What he chooses to do with it is up to him.

Notes

I was SO excited for this fest. Drarry, Rarry, and Dron are some of my favorite pairings, and to be able to combine all three is like a dream come true! Thank you to the lovely mods for running this. And, thank you to the fantabulous leftsidedown for the beta read. I appreciate the heck out of you 💖💖

Dedicated to the wonderful and talented Pahn for getting me aboard the Dreamling ship!

See the end of the work for more notes

“I’ve made up my mind,” Ron proclaimed, slamming his mug of ale on the table in resolve, “I’m not going to die.”

The table filled with laughter, drinks sloshing, feet stamping.

“And what tasks would you pursue with all that life?” a voice said, deep like thunder, clear like rain. It chilled Ron straight to his bones, vibrated the space between his ribs, and made his teeth chatter.

The Stranger was handsome, eerily so — too pale, too thin, too strange, too much. His eyes were the silver of the sword, his hair the white of the stars. He wore all black, midnight black, and the cut of his cloak was severe.

Ron wanted to look away. He wanted to drink him in. He wanted to drown in him.

“Must you frighten him so?” the Stranger’s companion asked, emerging near the Stranger’s shoulder. There was amusement and mirth in his tone.

He was as dark as the Stranger was light. The night to his day. His hair, wild and uncombed, fell around his face — framed it, more like — in a black velvety curtain. It was his eyes, though, that trapped Ron in his seat. Green like an emerald, green like moss. There were entire worlds hidden within those irises, worlds that Ron knew he would never see.

“Well?” the Stranger demanded, raising a pale eyebrow.

“If I could live forever,” Ron said, meeting his gaze, “I’d do everything.”

Travel the Seven Seas, bed the fairest maidens, dine with the wealthiest lords. He would fight the mightiest battles and praise the gracious gods above. How could he not if he had forever to live?

“A bold claim,” the Companion said, lips pulling up into a smile, *“make sure you make good on it.”*

“I will,” Ron promised.

And he would.

“Are you sorcerers? Wizards? Mages?” Ron asked at their next meeting.

It was exactly one hundred years later.

The same dusty tavern, the same excessive libations, the same Ronald Weasley. He had not aged in one hundred years. His friends had fallen, his family forgotten, and yet, Ron remained the same.

The Stranger and his companion were also the same. Though their cloaks had been replaced, dyed fabrics and leather boots just coming into style, the eyes, the stare, the smile were the same.

“Some might wrongly assume.” The Stranger tilted his head, elegant as the wind, delicate as a bird’s wing.

“Some might rightly presume.” The Companion’s smile was dazzling, bright like the sun, delightful like a baby’s first cry.

Ron ordered another round of ale, offering it to his strange company. He had enough money now, more than he knew what to do with. The coins often rattled in his pouch, clinking together, refusing to be silent, as if mocking him.

He took a sip to gain courage. “If not a sorcerer, then perhaps a faerie or an ageless foe?”

“We are what we have always been,” said the Stranger.

“What we will always be,” added the Companion.

“A creator and its destroyer.”

“A master and its servant.”

“Must you always talk in riddles?” Ron muttered into his glass. He felt restless under their combined attention, his body pulled taut across the loom of desire. Each plucked thread made his heart sing and his cheeks flood with colour.

“Must we?”

“Mustn’t we?”

“Can I get your names, at least?”

The Stranger and the Companion shared a brief look. The Stranger looked cross; the Companion looked amused.

“Perhaps at our next meeting.” The Stranger rose and gathered his long cloak. Ron had travelled all the world and never come across a cloak such as his, rippling like water, intricate as spun glass, entire galaxies woven into the folds.

“We look forward to your company again, Ron.”

His name falling from the Companion’s lips was familiar and new. It was a hearty stew after a long day's work, the sun breaking through a stormy sky. It was the comforting embrace of a lover.

Ron knew he would do anything to hear it again.

Another hundred years passed.

Ron stood outside the Three Broomsticks, wringing his hands. The sign had been replaced, the shutters on the windows repainted and re-weathered.

The pub had changed, and yet, he remained the same.

He had lost all the money, all the gold. Frivolous investments, deceitful entanglements. If they were to look upon him now, what would they think? Wasting such a precious gift, throwing away their attentions. Was living from discarded scraps really living?

Taking a deep breath, he stepped into the pub, pulling his threadbare cloak around himself. The Companion looked up and watched him approach. He was alone. Ron crossed the pub to sit beside him.

“Where is your other half?”

The Companion merely tilted his head, his hair the chaos of the wild, his eyes the green of the forest.

“What is your name?” asked Ron. He refused to leave today without getting some answers at least.

The Companion splayed a hand atop the table, brown like the earth, coarse like the sand, each dip and fold holding hundreds of stories, thousands of memories.

“You do not look well,” he said.

“Well, no.” Ron took a sip of his drink, avoiding those eyes, eyes full of life, eyes full of death. “I have fallen on misfortune.”

“How unfortunate.”

Ron almost smiled. “It is nothing another hundred years will not remedy.”

“So, you wish to continue?”

“I am not ready to die.”

There was so much more to see, so much more to do. Skills to learn, hearts to touch. No, he was not ready to die. He didn’t know if he ever would be.

The Companion studied him for a long while, hand resting on the tabletop, open and splayed as if waiting for Ron to take it, but he wouldn’t dare.

"You have surprised us." His voice was soft — musical — the symphony of the night, the calmness of the grave.

"Pleasurably, I hope." Ron glanced up from the table.

"Immeasurably."

He smiled, and Ron's breath caught. He had laid with many bedmates, men and women and some in between, but none could compare to the feeling of warmth as the Companion's eyes swept down his body.

"You may call me Harry," the man said, leaning closer, leaning across the table until his face was an inch from Ron's.

Up close Ron could see a latticework of scars, fissures in his skin, like streaks of lightning trailing down and under the edge of his garments. They hummed and shifted, sparked and cracked. Ron watched them, unable to look away.

"What are you?" Ron whispered, his breath getting trapped in the inch between them.

"I am Endless," he said and pressed his lips to Ron's.

At their next meeting, Ron was surprised to be greeted at the door by the Stranger. His eyes were the silver of a battle, the wrath of a fire.

"Come," he said, and Ron had no choice but to obey.

He led him down streets and around corners, up alleyways and inside an abandoned-looking building. The inside was elaborate and serpentine. Glass hung from the ceiling, and histories lined the shelves. Rooms of shifting sand, pillars of calcified salt. They stopped in what looked to be a study, steady flames burning in the hearth, anticipation swirling in the ashes.

The Stranger turned on him and pinned him against the wall. He was dreams and nightmares, lust and longing.

"Tell me," he demanded, his voice a mere hiss, pressed close to Ron's ear, **"what passed between you and he."**

Ron threw his head back and laughed. "Were you — Are you jealous?"

A smooth hand came up to wrap around Ron's throat, pressing in, feeling, waiting. His hand was strong, fluid. Ron felt the pull of the ocean, the tides drawing him under. He welcomed them, would gladly drown in their wake.

"Show me." It was an order and a plea, desperate and hopeful.

They quickly divested their garments, smooth skin against freckled hands. Ron had not changed in four hundred years; he wondered if the Stranger, too, was the same.

Later, the Stranger's lips moving down his body, Ron looked into those strange-coloured eyes. He was floating, gasping, washed away by the sea, standing in the centre of the storm.

"Come," he said, and Ron had no choice but to obey.

Ron sat at the empty table, the nearby lamp flickering.

Each new century brought new inventions, new battles, new light. Such was the path of mankind, forever doomed, forever learning.

He checked the time again.

He stayed until early morning when the barmaid shooed him out with the end of her broom.

He came back the next day and then the next just to be sure.

On the fourth day, he visited the banks of the Thames. He sat for hours, cigar hanging from his lips, thought furrowing his brow. He pictured hands as smooth as pearls and a face as cracked as stone. Hair as white as snow, eyes as green as grass.

Was this the end, then? Had his river of life finally run dry?

It pained him, he could admit, that they had not even deemed to say goodbye. They had swept into his life like a hurricane wind and left just as quickly (well, if he could count five hundred years as quick).

His eyes prickled, the burning cigar hanging uselessly between his fingers.

He realised he had never gotten the Stranger's name. He realised Harry might never say his name again.

Another hundred years passed.

Ron idled outside the Three Broomsticks, pacing nervously. The expensive suit jacket he was wearing hugged his waist, making it hard to breathe. He was a businessman now, rich and successful, highly revered, hardly ever seen. Fame was a detriment when you lived forever, when you could not escape it.

Taking a deep breath, he stepped into the pub, pulling his heavy jacket around himself. Harry looked up and watched him approach. The Stranger merely glanced in his direction before looking away. Ron crossed the pub to sit beside them.

"You look well," Harry said, eyes scanning down Ron's body and making him shiver.

“You missed our last appointment.” Ron frowned as soon as the words left his mouth. He hadn’t meant to be so combative. He had meant to be welcoming, meant to be seductive.

The Stranger scoffed. **“I didn’t know we were beholden to a human now.”**

“Draco, be nice,” Harry chastised, but he looked amused.

“Draco…” Ron tested the name on his tongue. “That’s a nice name.”

Draco’s face shuttered, his cheeks going as white as his hair. He looked down at his lap where his long, elegant fingers were laced together. Ron remembered those same fingers, strong as a riptide, smooth as silk, curling around him.

Harry smiled and rested his chin in the palm of his hand. *“We are sorry to have missed you,”* he said, *“We would have enjoyed your company.”* His eyes sparkled like jewels, like firecrackers set alight. There were entire worlds hidden within those irises, worlds that Ron was only beginning to comprehend.

“Pleasurably, I hope.” He licked his lips.

“Immeasurably.”

Draco glanced between them and scowled, crossing one long leg over the other. His clothes were still obsidian black, dreams and designs hidden beneath each crease and fold.

Ron cleared his throat, raising his hand to call for another round, his heart hammering in his chest. He had forgotten what it felt like to have them both here, to have them both together.

Overwhelming. Otherworldly.

“So, where have you been? What have you been doing?” He didn’t really expect an answer. He had only just learned the Stranger’s name after all. However, Harry surprised him.

“Draco was trapped by a human,” he said, barely suppressing a grin.

“Harry was trapped as a human,” Draco hissed in retaliation and threw him a glare.

“That’s —” Ron paused. “Wait, how?”

Harry shrugged, his blood-red shirt stretching at the seams. *“There was a prophecy. I fulfilled it.”* Now that Ron looked closely, he could see new scars on his face, a new sheen to his hair. The shape of a lightning bolt peeked out near the edge of his hairline.

Draco looked away, gaze focusing on some point off in the distance. **“A human found the wrong book. Cast the wrong spell.”**

“But you’re back now? You’re together again?”

Harry and Draco shared a brief look. Harry looked pleading; Draco looked contemplative.

“Yes,” Draco said slowly, **“we have returned.”**

Harry held up his glass for a toast. *“We are together again.”*

They met every one hundred years. At the same time, at the same pub. They ordered the same drinks and shared the same air.

Each time, however, was not the same. Ron was not the same.

When Draco was absent, Harry took him to the edge of consciousness, where cracks of lightning lit up the sky. His coarse hands running over and under Ron’s body, outside and in. They talked of Destiny and Despair, the viciousness of life, the peacefulness of death.

When Harry was busy, Draco brought him to the centre of creation, where dreams were made real. His pink tongue tracing over Ron’s collarbone, smooth and tantalising, hot and insistent. They talked of Desire and Destruction, the callousness of humans, the thoughtfulness of love.

(They never talked about Delirium. “He’s crazy,” Draco had said the one time Ron had asked, Harry nodding his head behind him.)

He loved them, each and every time.

When they were together, Ron felt like he might break, his heart shattering into a million reflective pieces. Draco’s feather-soft hair held in his hands, Harry’s desert-rough lips dragging down his spine.

No, he was not ready to die. He didn’t know if he ever would be.

End Notes

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